



JAMES

Introduction

- How many like working out vs. not working out?
- James is basically telling us the same thing in our spiritual walk.
 - Life throws us pain, exhaustion, and worry, but despite the immediate thoughts and feelings, we see that God uses them to build our faith, grow closer to Him, and strengthen us.
- It is important to remember how we respond to hard times, trials, and the weight of life. It's easy to want to cave in and let them consume us, but what if we can navigate these things in life with a different perspective that leads to a God-honoring outcome?



Tension

- When life gets hard, how do you respond?
 - Takeaway:
 - Trials and temptations aren't wasted; they grow us and reveal our need for God.



Truth

- James 1

- ¹James, a **servant** of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the dispersion: Greetings. ²Count it all **joy, my brothers**, when you meet **trials of various kinds**, ³for you know that the testing of your faith produces **endurance**. ⁴And let endurance have its full effect, that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.

- Servant: his humble willingness to be at the Lord's disposal
- My brothers: speaking to peers, fellow Christians
- All joy: a state of well-being, not an immediate feeling of happiness or pleasure.
- Trials of various kinds: unwelcomed or unexpected experiences. Trials in general, or hardships, persecution, sickness, and poverty.
- Endurance: growing determination in the face of adversity, based on hope.



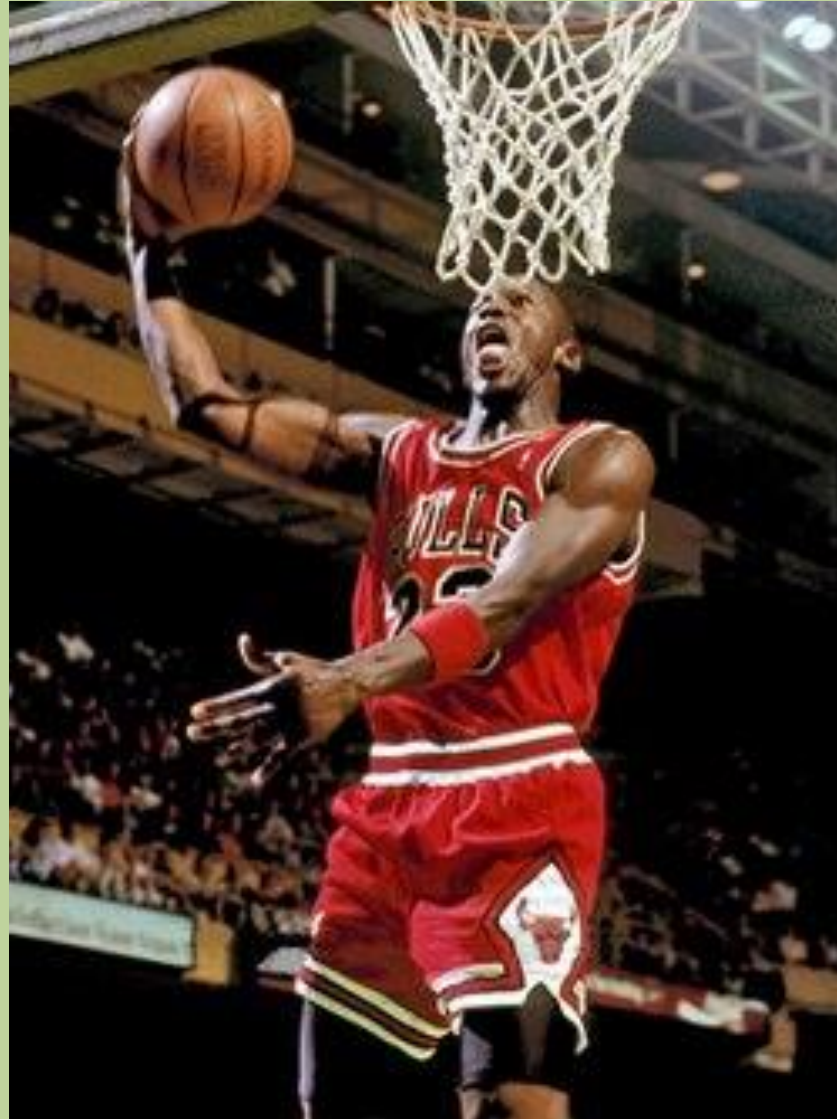
Truth

- Trials produce endurance:
 - Trials are inevitable. What do they do?
 - James says that testing our faith produces endurance. Why would he say that?
 - Paul tells us in Romans 5: suffering produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope.
 - The purpose:
 - As we experience these hardships, we have to trust and believe that **God is working in the trials**. Our trials and endurance draw us closer to Him and strengthen our relationships and faith.



Truth

- The Basketball Goat



Truth

- ⁵ Now if any of you lacks wisdom, **he should ask God**, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But let him ask **in faith** without doubting. For the doubter is like the surging sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord, ⁸ being **double-minded** and unstable in all his ways. ⁹ Let the **brother of humble circumstances boast in his exaltation**, ¹⁰ but **let the rich boast in his humiliation** because he will pass away like a flower of the field.



Truth

- ¹¹ For the sun rises and together with the scorching wind, dries up the grass; its flower falls off, and its beautiful appearance perishes. In the same way, the rich person will wither away while pursuing his activities. ¹² **Blessed is the one who endures trials**, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. ¹³ No one undergoing a trial should say “I am being tempted by God,” since God is not tempted by evil, and he himself doesn’t tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and **enticed** by his own evil desire. ¹⁵ Then after desire has conceived, it **gives birth to sin**, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.



Truth

- **He should ask God:** the giver of wisdom
- **in faith:** not a degree or standard of faith, for God to hear their prayers. God hears the prayers of those whose lives demonstrate what they have faith in Him.
- **double-minded:** someone who lives two contradictory lifestyles.
- **Boast in exaltation/humiliation:** Two people facing trials, in relation to eternity, neither the poor nor the wealthy has anything to boast about; they are equals before God.
- **Blessed is the one who endures trials:** an attitude of determined courage that is unaffected by external circumstances.
- **Enticed:** drawing in an unsuspecting victim with an attractive bait or lure.
- **gives birth to sin:** Desire is conceived when a person yields to temptation. As sin matures, this ultimately leads to God's judgment of death.



Truth

- **Temptation doesn't come from God.**
 - The test of temptation is a demonstration of our faith.
 - Through the trials, we would show a faith that is genuine and strong.
- **Charles Spurgeon:**
 - So that those who endure temptation rightly, endure it because they love God. They say to themselves, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' They cannot fall into sin because it would grieve him who loves them so well, and whom they love with all their hearts.
- **James is clear: God doesn't tempt us, He tests us.**
 - John Piper says: Our faith in God and our love for God are being tested with every temptation. And every test, if we do not act in faith, can result in our falling into temptation.



Truth



Application



- James

- ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brother. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the **Father of lights**, with **whom there is no variation or shadow due to change**. ¹⁸ Of his own will, he brought us forth by the **word of truth**, that we should be a kind of **firstfruits** of his creatures.

- **Father of lights** – The one who created light
- **whom there is no variation or shadow due to change**- God's nature is unchanging and His promises are secure.
- **word of truth** – gospel
- **firstfruits** – Best harvest

Application

- **Give thanks for God's goodness**

- His goodness is constant and unwavering. When we give thanks for God's goodness, it offers a different perspective to look at what's going on around us.
- Move you from what you think you deserve to what God has already given.
- Spiritual Maturity
- CHALLENGE: What can you be thankful for in your life?



Application

- **Depend on God's Strength**

- Our trails reveal a lot about us. They show us what we rely on or depend on.
 - Are you relying on yourself or leaning on God?
- Depending on God isn't a sign of weakness.
 - Its strength
 - Its worship
 - It's putting yourself in the right order before Him.



Conclusion

- Trials and temptations aren't wasted; they grow us and reveal our need for God.
- Take time this week and write down what you're thankful for and give God thanks for that. Remind yourself to depend on His strength instead of trying to go through life alone.
- Don't walk out tonight feeling defeated by trials and temptation. Endure. Keep your eyes on the Lord. Stay anchored in Him.

